

'I can't afford what I used to': how the cost of living has changed viewing habits

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes how many people are giving up their subscriptions to streaming services in order to save money and interviews four people to identify their reasons for doing so.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of saving money in the current wave of inflation that is being experienced by some countries around the world, notably the UK and the US. The answers depend on personal choice but make sure you ask students to give reasons for the order they have chosen.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. The word *spree* is usually used in the phrases 'shopping spree' or 'spending spree' but can also be found in the term 'crime spree'. The verb *to ditch* is most commonly found in journalism, but 'to ditch one's plans' or 'to ditch an idea' are also used. The word *untapped* has its origins in tapping barrels of beer and, more recently, has been applied to oil wells. Note that the word *quid* (in the text) is a colloquial word for 'British pound'.

Key:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. <i>inflation</i> | 6. <i>outgoings</i> |
| 2. <i>subscriber</i> | 7. <i>untapped</i> |
| 3. <i>spree</i> | 8. <i>rocket</i> |
| 4. <i>ditch</i> | 9. <i>boost</i> |
| 5. <i>bare bones</i> | 10. <i>make the most of</i> |

3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers and students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in item 1 they may say 'because the cost of living is going up rapidly' or similar.

Key:

1. *because the inflation rate is nearly 10%*
2. *because she is not making much use of it*
3. *if they have some interesting programmes*
4. *because she has disabilities*
5. *a luxury*
6. *if they offered a discount rate for pensioners*
7. *pensioners*
8. *because he has a free subscription*
9. *by leaving and re-joining them*
10. *because they had no time to watch TV*

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. *Universal credit* is a benefit paid to unemployed and low-income people in the UK. A *box set* is a set of programmes containing all the episodes in a particular series. The term originally applied to a set of CDs.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. <i>d</i> | 5. <i>a</i> |
| 2. <i>f</i> | 6. <i>h</i> |
| 3. <i>g</i> | 7. <i>e</i> |
| 4. <i>c</i> | 8. <i>b</i> |

5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

6. In your own words

- a. The task could also be done as homework and students could then present their reports to the class.